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Noble couple face felony drug charges

\$25,000 worth of cocaine, marijuana allegedly seized

By Angela Mapes
The Journal Gazette

A Noble County couple is expected to appear in court today to face charges of dealing cocaine and marijuana, after police said they found \$25,000 worth of drugs at their home.

Hugo Mojica, 37, and Juana Flores, 27, were arrested at 7:49 p.m. Monday at 3200 W. Tibbot St., Wawaka, about five miles northwest of Albion. Their arrest came after an investigation by the Indiana Multi-Agency Group Enforcement Drug Task Force lasting several months, Noble County Sheriff Gary Leatherman said.

According to court documents, the couple delivered 15 grams of cocaine to an undercover officer at the home Monday.

They had about 15 pounds of marijuana and more than a pound of cocaine at the residence, which the couple apparently rented, plus \$1,700 in cash, the sheriff said. The street value of the drugs seized is estimated to be \$25,000.

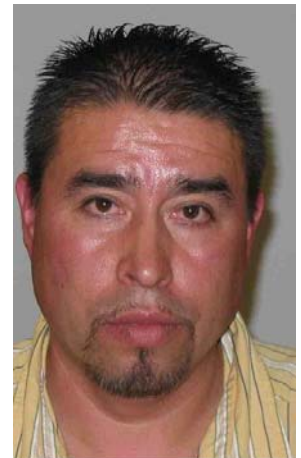
Both are charged with dealing in cocaine, possession with intent to deliver cocaine, possession with intent to deliver marijuana, all Class A felonies, and possession of a sawed-off shotgun and maintaining a common nuisance, both Class D felonies.

Flores is nine months pregnant, and an 11-month-old child was taken from the residence and placed with child welfare workers, Leatherman said.

Both Mojica and Flores are being held at the Noble County Jail without bail, the sheriff said.

Although a sawed-off shotgun was found during a search of the house, the couple was arrested without incident.

During surveillance of the residence, officers observed a car leaving and stopped it a short distance away. The driver of the car, 39-year-old Todd Hammel of LaGrange, was



Mojica



Flores



Hammel

arrested for possession of a quarter-pound of marijuana.

He is being held in lieu of \$4,500 bail.

The raid marks the second time this month a child has been taken from a Noble County home during drug-related searches.

On Aug. 4, IMAGE officers raided a home at 4663 N. County Road 400 E. in rural Kendallville and found a child among active methamphetamine labs, police said.

Ten people have been arrested as a result of that investigation. Since May, at least \$25,000 worth of meth was made or passed through that house, police said.